WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

**FISCAL NOTE**

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4726

By Delegate Cooper, Heckert and Hillenbrand

[Introduced January 15, 2024; Referred
to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and Homeland Security then Government Organization ]

A BILL to amend and re-enact §9A-1-9, of the Code of West Virginia,1931, as amended, relating to the creation of a liaison program with the federal Department of Veterans Affairs Transition Assistance Program in order to actively inform separating and retiring active component service members of the many incentives in relocating to West Virginia upon their conclusion of active service.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

CHAPTER 9A. VETERANS' AFFAIRS.

ARTICLE 1. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS’ ASSISTANCE.

§9A-1-9. Duties of department.

The department of veterans assistance shall:

(1) Assist veterans, their widows, widowers, dependents and orphans within the state, in properly presenting their claims before the United States Veterans Administration, its administrator, or any federal agency, the State of West Virginia, or any of the several states of the United States, when the claims arise out of service with the armed forces of the United States as defined in §9A-1-1 of this code;

(2) Contact all veterans organizations in this state through their duly elected or appointive officers to effectuate the purposes of this article and aid in the efficiency of the operations of the department;

(3) Render all possible and proper advice, assistance and counsel to veterans, their families, and their widows, dependents and orphans, within the state, and furnish them information on compensation, allowances, pensions, insurance, rehabilitation, hospitalization, education, vocational training, or refresher or retraining courses in education or training, employment, loans or aid for the purchase, acquisition or construction of homes, farms, farm equipment and business property, preference in the purchase of property and preference in employment, as provided or may be provided by any federal act, any federal agency, this state or other states;

(4) Make careful inquiry into all claims presented for payment out of the State Treasury from any appropriation made for the benefit of veterans, their widows, widowers, dependents and orphans.

(5) Create, maintain, and direct, in conjunction with the West Virginia Department of Economic Development, the Office of the Vice-President for Economic Innovation at West Virginia University, the Center for Veteran, Military and Family Programs at West Virginia University, and the West Virginia National Guard, a liaison program with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Transition Assistance Program ("TAP") in order to actively and effectively inform honorably separating and retiring active component service members of the many incentives to be found in relocating to West Virginia upon their conclusion of active service. The liaison program may create travel teams with a representative from each of the organizations listed in this subsection to visit Department of Defense active-duty stations and make presentations in TAP offices in furtherance of this liaison program. The liaison program also may create printed materials suitable to be provided to separating and retiring active component service members designed to highlight the many military and veteran related benefits available to military personnel, family members, and veterans in West Virginia.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create a liaison program with the federal Department of Veterans Affairs Transition Assistance Program in order to actively inform separating and retiring active component service members of the many incentives in relocating to West Virginia upon their conclusion of active service.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.